

their primary focus in the treatment of their patients. As a result of their influence, my manual skills were refined and advanced.

Therefore, it is obvious to me as one skilled in this area why the present invention is clearly patentable over Lohati et al, collectively and Hamada. More importantly, the present invention is titled, Massage and Tactile Stimulation Device because of the distinguishable effects it has on the human tissues and nervous system, unlike those even possible with the prior art of Lohati and Hamada.

Claim 9 further clarifies and describes the projections in the present invention. The unique advantage of an individual, stationary, single upward projection located at the pad of digits and back of knuckles (phalanges) is not an obvious design choice of one skilled in this art, as apparently stated by the Examiner. There are various types and styles of massage. Effleurage (superficial stroking), petrissage (kneading), percussion (tapping), and friction are a few examples of massage strokes. Swedish and deep tissue are types of massage.

Lohati reveals a massage glove having a plurality of rotating massaging elements or projections being attached via adhesive. The rotating balls and interlocking beads of Lohati make it appropriate for effleurage or superficial stroking. The rotating balls would prevent a user from effectively performing kneading, make tapping uncomfortable and proper friction stroking impossible. The present invention, unlike Lohati, is **not** intended for superficial stroking due to the height of the stationary, upward projections. In addition, the stationary upward projections of the present invention are attached via adhesive. If the present invention were used for superficial stroking, as possible with Lohati, stationary upward projections could become detached from glove due the

pressure sensitive adhesion. Therefore, again, the present invention is not intended for superficial stroke. However, the present invention is great for friction stroke and deep tissue massage.

Hamada reveals a massage glove with a plurality of protrusions on the fingers, in the palm, and on the side of palm. Hamada states as its advantage the ability to grasp medical tools, implying to this inventor the protrusions described by Hamada assist with gripping. To one skilled in the area of medicine, patient and staff safety is key. Therefore, the protrusions must be of a height to assist with grasping of medical tools, safely. Hamada gives insight into the height of the protrusions through its stated advantage. Therefore, Hamada is best suited for superficial stroking, and possibly kneading. However, Hamada would not be appropriate for friction or tapping massage strokes.

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tapping strokes

As demonstrated in our interview on August 5, 2002 this present invention delivers a deep, concentrated point specific pressure to body tissues. This point specific pressure is paramount in releasing trigger points in the muscles of the body. A trigger point release cannot be effectively achieved with the invention of Lohati. The rotating massaging balls, plurality of interlocking beads, and inability to focus point specific pressure without the hindrance of other massaging elements in close proximity makes the invention of Lohati totally ineffective in performing this task, unlike the present invention. In addition, the rotating massaging ball inhibits the use of advanced manual techniques that require the use of a stationary object. Lohati is totally inept for the advanced skills the present invention is created for.

The prior art of Hamada reveals a massage glove 1 "having front finger portions, back finger portions, and a palm portion, the front finger portions and the palm portion each having a plurality of protrusions (2-8). Though this description is noted, the present invention is a massage and tactile stimulation device comprising a glove. As the hand comprises a front finger area, back finger area, and a palm area, the invention of Hamada could not be claiming anatomy, as these areas are part of anatomy and simply a clear way of describing a location. Unlike the present invention, the palm portion described by Hamada has protrusions. The palm portion of the present invention does not include protrusions, as stated by Examiner on page . On the contrary, the present invention includes friction areas in the palm region, more specifically thenar and hypothenar areas, for improved manual manipulations of the skin (i.e. twisting).

not in  
clear

A stated advantage of Hamada is, "Medical tools can be easily grasped when using the gloves with protrusions". As shown in our interview, the projection height, in the present invention, would prevent its use in this manner. Unlike the present invention, Hamada reveals protrusions on the palm portion, finger portion, and side of palm portion. The present invention reveals single upward projections on the pad of digits and back of phalanges in the knuckle region that arguably creates a greater possible force on tissues than the side of palm protrusions in Hamada.

The present invention comprising a glove takes advantage of hand mobility and finger flexibility. Mobility and flexibility are key for effective use of the present invention. Therefore, loose material hindering movement would not be chosen for the present invention. An elastic or resilient material that contours to the hand allowing maximum freedom of movement was chosen for the preferred embodiment.

The projection height is paramount for the effectiveness of this massage and tactile stimulation device. Unlike the plurality of protrusions in Hamada, the projection height of at least 0.14 inches (3.5 mm) in the present invention inhibits it from advantageously grasping medical tools. Therefore, the size of the projections is not an obvious design choice. Therefore, in no way possible are the protrusions in Hamada equipped for massage and tactile stimulation of the deeper tissues, by its own stated advantage. The decision to use a minimum height is key to the effectiveness of the present invention, and is not obvious to one skilled in this art. After testing various projection heights, noting tissue response, and observing individual's response during massage, this minimum height was discovered. This was not obvious, as there are various types of massages. Hamada and Lohati are intended for cutaneous or surface massaging. Therefore, as cutaneous or surface massaging is their focus, a minimum height would not be stated or necessary. However, the present invention is capable of deep tissue massaging and stimulation of nerve receptors. A minimum height is imperative to reach these deeper tissues. The single upward projection in the present invention makes it optimal for reaching and stimulating the deeper tissues in a way not possible by Lohati and Hamada.

As one skilled in the art of manual therapy and one knowledgeable in the effect of surface area in relation to force production, it is obvious the present invention is patentable over Lohati, Lohati et al in view of Levine, Hamada, and Hamada in view of McClurken. The Examiner therefore is requested to pass this case to issue.

In the event the Examiner has any comments, suggestions, or further clarification is required to place this case in condition for allowance, **please extend a courtesy call to the inventor to promptly resolve any remaining matters.**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Deanna T. Ongwela", written over a horizontal line.

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